

## Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3071

S E C R E T AMMAN 6940

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO, XF

SUBJ: SENATOR KENNEDY'S TALK WITH KING HUSSEIN

1. SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SISTER, MRS JEAN SMITH, AND STAFF MEMBER ROBERT HUNTER, MET WITH KING HUSSEIN FOR FORTY-FIVE MINUTES THIS MORNING. CONVERSATION COVERED MUCH GROUND ALREADY FAMILIAR TO DEPARTMENT. BELOW ARE AREAS IN WHICH NEW THOUGHTS OR IDEAS EMERGED.

2. EGYPT: KING CENTERED HIS DISCUSSION ABOUT RABAT SUMMIT AND FUTURE IN THE AREA. NOTED THAT EGYPT HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT AT RABAT -- NOT PROVIDING TO JORDAN HELP WHICH THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD BEEN PROMISED. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE THOUGHT THAT SADAT HAD CREATED A BOX FOR HIMSELF AND HE WAS NOW IN IT. NOW HE WOULD HAVE NO REAL COMPANY IN FUTURE NEGOTIATION EFFORTS. IN ADDITION, SLOWING DOWN THE MOMENTUM HAD RAISED SERIOUSLY THE DANGER OF RENEWED WAR. KING BELIEVES SADAT IS NOT IN POSITION TO JOIN SYRIA IF WAR BREAKS OUT AGAIN BECAUSE HE DOES NOT HAVE THE EQUIPMENT AND SPARE PARTS TO DO SO AND HAS ALREADY MADE IT CLEAR TO OTHER ARAB LEADERS THAT HE WOULD NOT JOIN IN A WAR, IN SPITE OF GENERALLY MORE FUZZY EGYPTIAN PUBLIC STATEMENTS. KING SAID SADAT NOW HAS, IN EVENTUALITY OF WAR, ONLY THREE ALTERNATIVES: (A) TO GO BACK TO THE SOVIETS AND SEEK MASSIVE MILITARY SUPPLIES AND THEREBY RISK THE REACQUISITION OF SOVIET DOMINANCE IN EGYPTIAN

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POLICY; (B) TO INCUR THE IRE OF THE OTHER ARAB STATES

BY DRAGGING HIS FEET AND REMAINING OUT OF THE CONFLICT;  
AND (C) TO RISK AN OVERTHROW BECAUSE OF DOMESTIC INTERNAL  
INSTABILITY AND ARMY PRESSURE BY DECLARING HIMSELF OUT  
AT THE BEGINNING. IN EACH CASE SADAT AND DGYPT WOULD LOSE.  
IT WAS KING'S JUDGEMENT THAT SADAT WAS IN A WEAKENED  
INTERNAL POSITION AND THEREFORE WAS NOT IN GOOD SHAPE  
TO FACE ANY OF THE FUTURE ALTERNATIVES. HE CAPPED HIS  
REMARKS BY STATING THAT HE THOUGHT THE US HAD TOO OFTEN  
OPERATED AS IF EGYPT WAS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL -- INDEED  
THE SOLE -- LEADER OF THE ARAB WORLD. HE THOUGHT EGYPT WAS A  
COUNTRY ON WHICH THE US HAD DEPENDED TOO HEAVILY.  
THERE WERE OTHER SIGNIFICANT ARAB STATES AND THE US SHOULD  
BE CAREFUL ABOUT GOING OVERBOARD WITH THE EGYPTIANS.

3. ON WAR: KING SAID HE THOUGHT SITUATION AT PRESENT  
WAS VERY DANGEROUS. ARAB AMBASSADORS HAD BEEN CALLED  
IN IN DAMASCUS YESTERDAY AND TOLD THAT ISRAELIS WERE ABOUT  
TO STRIKE. SYRIANS SAID THEY COULD NOT FACE THE ISRAELIS ALONE,  
WITHOUT EGYPT AND JORDAN, FOR THEY WERE SURE TO LOSE.  
KING CONTRASTED THIS POINT WITH FACT THAT SYRIANS HAD  
ALSO SAID CLEARLY THEY WOULD NOT RENEW THE UNDOF MANDATE  
WHICH SEEMED TO MAKE WAR INEVITABLE. WHEN PRESSED AS  
TO WHETHER SYRIA WOULD CHANGE ITS VIEW ON UNDOF, KING  
SAID THEY TEND TO BE STUBBORN, BUT  
THEY MIGHT BE SHIFTED. HE WENT ON TO INDICATE THAT HE  
BELIEVED ASAD WAS UNDER VERY CONSIDERABLE DOMESTIC  
PRESSURE ON THIS QUESTION.

4. ON THE PLO: THE SENATOR ASKED HIM DIRECTLY WHETHER  
HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR US TO BEGIN A  
DIALOGUE OR TALKS WITH THE PLO. THE KING SAID HE WOULD  
PREFER NOT TO COMMENT ON THAT POINT AS HE DIDN'T REALLY  
FEEL QUALIFIED. IMPLICATION WAS CLEARLY HE DID NOT  
WANT TO MAKE DIRECT RECOMMENDATION ON US POLICIES.  
HOWEVER, WHEN PRESSED BY THE SENATOR FOR AN ANSWER,  
HE SAID INTER ALIA THAT HE THOUGHT PLO SHOULD BE GIVEN  
SOME TIME TO SEE WHAT THEY CAN DO WITH THE PROBLEM ON  
THEIR OWN. WE AND SENATOR KENNEDY BOTH INTERPRET THIS ANSWER  
(NOT SURPRISINGLY) AS BEING CLEARLY A HOPE THAT WE WILL NOT  
INTERVENE IN ANY WAY THAT CAN BE PERCEIVED BY PLO AS

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ASSISTING THEIR CAUSE, AT LEAST UNTIL IT CAN BE SEEM  
WHETHER PLO CAN MOVE TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS ON ITS OWN.  
PICKERING

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic DecapTIONing:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 NOV 1974  
**DecapTION Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**DecapTION Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CollinP0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974AMMAN06940  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740332-0804  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CollinP0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 MAR 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** WITHDRAWN <21 AUG 2002 by izenbei0, 3.4.X6>; RELEASED <14 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <14 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SENATOR KENNEDY'S TALK WITH KING HUSSEIN  
**TAGS:** PFOR, JO, XF, (KENNEDY, EDWARD M), (HUSSEIN I)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005